

Guidelines

for the Review of Draft Proposals for Research Units



Disclaimer: The English translation of this document is provided for informational purposes. In the event of a discrepancy between the English and the German versions, the German text takes precedence.

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I Programme Information

Funding for a Research Unit enables outstanding researchers to collaborate closely on specific medium-term projects whose anticipated findings could not be achieved within individual grants programmes. Furthermore, measures tailored specifically to the Research Unit are pursued in order to promote researchers in early career phases and also equity and diversity. A Research Unit typically has fewer than ten projects which are coordinated to enable work on a common research topic. The majority of research projects should be university-based.

A Research Unit is made up of project leaders and project members. One researcher assumes the role of spokesperson. The spokesperson should be a full-time university teacher.

Applicants must first submit a draft proposal to the DFG, which then undergoes review. If successful, the DFG will invite the applicants to submit an establishment proposal.

The total duration of funding is generally eight years; the first funding period is usually four years. Continued funding may be applied for with a renewal proposal (see the Guidelines for the Research Units Programme – DFG form 50.04).

www.dfg.de/formulare/50_04

Please note:

General Guidelines for Reviews (DFG form 10.20) are available at:

www.dfg.de/formulare/10_20

The review should not exceed two pages in length.

II Structure of the Review

1. How would you assess the **quality of the project**, especially with regard to originality and the anticipated contribution to knowledge?

Is funding as a group likely to produce a significant benefit compared to the funding of individual projects? Does the research question require a funding horizon of at least eight years?

2. To what extent do the **objectives and work programme** of the unit as a whole as well as those of the individual projects convincingly reflect clear working hypotheses and an appropriately distinct topic? Please comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the planned investigations. Are the methods and the schedule as well as the concept for handling research data suitable?

3. How would you evaluate the soundness of the preliminary work, the quality of publications (please refer to the Guidelines for Preparing Publication Lists) and the **qualifications of the applicants** – in general and in relation to the project as a whole and the specific individual projects?
Please also comment on the extent to which the spokesperson of the Research Unit meets the requirements in terms of their scientific track record, experience in leading projects, including third-party-funded projects, and integration and leadership skills.

4. How would you assess the **work and research environment**?
 - Is/are the host institution(s) suitable for the implementation of the project, particularly in terms of the necessary equipment and facilities?

 - Please also comment on the following aspects in relation to the Research Unit as a whole:
For single-location Research Units: Can structural effects be expected in the local area? For multi-location Research Units: How is the collaboration between the participants to be supported and organised?

5. How do you rate the **measures taken to promote** researchers in early career phases? Does the department offer doctoral programmes?

6. Are **equity and diversity** taken into account appropriately? Is the subject-specific involvement of researchers appropriate in terms of gender equality? How do you rate the measures to be taken to promote gender equality for researchers, diversity in research and the compatibility of research and family?

7. Please provide a **clear recommendation** as to whether the applicants should be invited to submit an establishment proposal. Is the cost estimate given in the draft proposal plausible?